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made a lease or perfected a deed respecting a considerable property. The length of time since the perfecting of the instrument has been so great, that the person whose name is subscribed to it, has almost entirely lost all recollection of the circumstance. With the utmost cunning therefore, he represents himself to the court and jury, as an extremely conscientious person, and gives such evidence as the following:—"It is really so long since this deed appears to have been signed, that I am almost in doubt respecting it. That appears to be my handwriting, but time so materially affects the hand, that I am almost inclined to hesitate respecting the signature. I think that is my writing; but there is one circumstance which will determine the point. I am always in the habit of putting a sixpence under the seal, so that if there be no sixpence under this seal, the deed never came from me; but if there be, I can then have no hesitation in swearing positively to the signature." The circumstance introduced in this artful manner could not fail to produce a strong impression on a jury. But Miss Edgeworth's story is of a very different kind.

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*To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.*

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**M**R. POPE'S translation of the *Iliad* is universally and deservedly admired. Yet there are various passages which are fairly liable to exception and censure. In many instances he introduces ideas which are not to be found in the original; and in so far is not a faithful translator.

To one very beautiful passage I wish to turn the reader's attention; as it is evident, that a deviation from what Homer has said has led the

translator into false imagery. The passage I mean is at the end of the 8th book of the *Iliad*.

"As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night,  
O'er heaven's clear azure spreads her sacred light,  
When not a breath disturbs the deep serene,  
And not a cloud o'ercasts the solemn scene;  
Around her throne the vivid planets roll,  
And stars unnumber'd gild the glowing pole,  
O'er the dark trees a yellower verdure shed,  
And tip with silver every mountain's head;  
Then shine the vales, the rocks in prospect rise,  
A flood of glory bursts from all the skies."

Homer however simply says, "As when in the heaven, the stars appear exceedingly beautiful around the splendid moon, when the air is free from wind, and all the watch-towers, mountain tops and forests appear. The immense firmament bursts upon the view; and all the stars are seen."

How much of *his own* has Pope given us in his translation or paraphrase of the passage! And notwithstanding the flowing majesty of his numbers, the judicious critic will perceive several considerable faults. When the moon shines with her greatest brightness, the stars and planets lose their vivid lustre, and appear with a very faint effulgence; therefore the word *vivid* in the translation is quite inappropriate. Besides, fewer stars are seen during the bright moonlight, than at other times: consequently the words, "stars unnumber'd," &c. are improperly introduced.\* The words "yellower verdure," are incorrectly applied, inasmuch as the brightest light of the moon is never sufficient to give to woods any thing approaching to a yellow tinge. It does little more than shew the deep gloom in

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\* Even Homer errs when he says, "and all the stars are seen."

which the forests are involved. The line "and tips with silver every mountain's head," is exceedingly incorrect. The moon affords no light sufficient for this purpose. Every person may satisfy himself, by observation, on this point. The rising or setting sun tips the hills and mountains with gold; but the utmost light of the moon merely serves to discover those large and distant objects to the observer's eye. The line, "a flood of glory bursts from all the skies," is very poetic, though it does not exactly convey the meaning of the original. And, in truth, I have often thought that the firmament appears in much greater glory in a clear frosty night, in winter, when all the heaven is in a glow, than when the moon's effulgence causes countless stars to "hide their diminished heads."

Upon the whole, it may be observed, that beautiful versification will not atone for incorrectness in giving an author's meaning, and still less for the introduction of imagery inconsistent with nature.

CRITICUS.

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*To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine,*

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MANY are the useful arts and important discoveries which ingenious men have invented, and great talents improved: but there are none of more utility than the art of printing. To shew the benefits derived from it, and the advantages which it confers, would require the learning of the greatest author in Europe. As the glorious luminary of heaven is the source of light, and the cause of heat to the neighbouring planets, so this highly important art is the vehicle of useful knowledge, and of profitable wisdom to every rank of society. It in some

measure assimilates the peasant with the prince, and makes the mechanic equal with the philosopher. With a little industry the studious reader and curious inquirer can sit in the humble cot, or retire to the closet, and there enjoy all the sweets that are derived from the labours of past ages, or the unremitting researches of the present. In every country where this happy invention has been properly cultivated, we see the inhabitants acquiring every thing that can contribute to their external convenience or mental pleasure, to their outward felicity or rational enjoyment. Its blessings are almost as great as the vital air which we breathe.

I shall endeavour to shew the advantages possessed by those ages and countries where printing has become general; the disadvantages under which former ages laboured prior to its discovery; and the miseries resulting to those countries where it has not yet found its way. Of the many advantages which it imparts, I shall mention three; the rapid progress of learning, the advancement in civilization, and the dissemination of truth. It is well known that learning has made great progress since the invention of printing. If we take a retrospect of former ages we shall see the gross ideas, and the corrupt manners which prevailed in Europe; but from the very moment that printing began to appear, the seeds of science which were buried began to bud, to blossom, and to bring forth the happy fruits on which the present generation so copiously feast.

Learning has power to regulate the conduct, polish the manners, refine the taste, embellish the conversation, mend the heart, enlighten the understanding, and elevate the soul. Without it what is human nature, but a mere blank. The hu-